



Kula Manu
2004

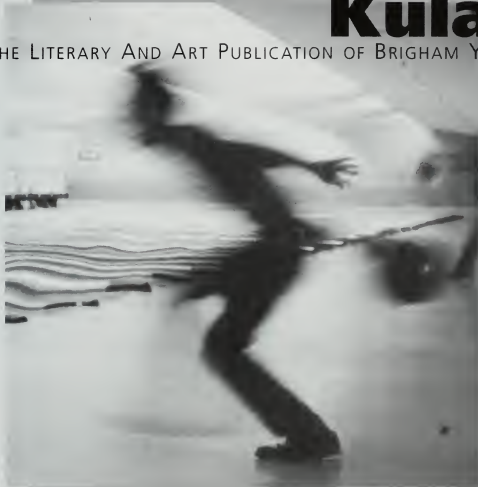
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Kula Manu

THE LITERARY AND ART PUBLICATION OF BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY HAWAII



spoken words fly away.
written words remain.

ancient latin proverb

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Sharon BEESLEY, Kula Manu 2004 Editor-in-chief

He knows the fashion, the scent of beer and smoke,
and uttering swear words while chewing toothpicks
as being basic alley etiquette.

Despite his lane five commitments,
his mom makes him go to school dances.

He obeys,
and dances like a wobbly bowling pin
among orange helium balloons
tissue paper flowers, and cologne-scented peers.

One time he fell during the electric slide,
and took out five people.
The next song he took out five more.
He smiled and called it
a spare dance.

IN THIS EDITION

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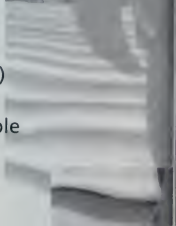
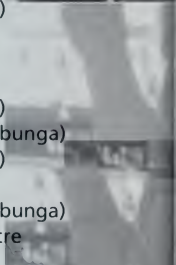
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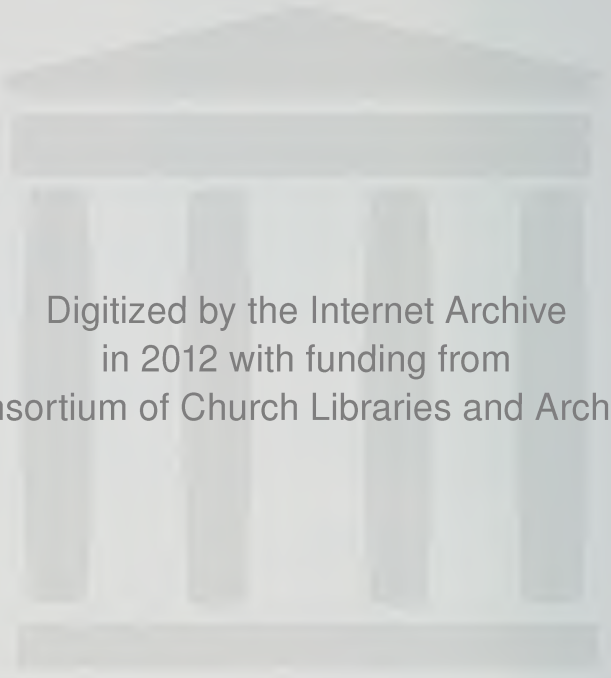
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louise plummer
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EDDIE

Shem GREENWOOD

His face, trembling and unshaven
was a broken replica of his father's.
Shiftless, he spoke slowly
wearing a filthy woman's coat,
but honesty mingled with the words that rose
with the smoke of the cigarette dying between his fingers
and sincerity bled through in the eyes that
seldom met mine.
Looking into the open heart of this man
who somehow seemed to lie to himself,
yet tell the truth
to God.

ENDINGS

James WALKER

Not "flights of angels sing thee to thy rest,"
Nor "I saw no shadow of another parting from her."
Not "seemed to lead into the heart of an immense darkness,"
Nor "in their death they were not divided."
Not "boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past,"
Nor "fully answered in the perfect happiness of the union."
No—no fanfare of trumpets:
A quiet key slipped into a lock,
a final rifling of drawers, leaving
three broken chunks of chalk, a stub of eraser, a lucky Canadian penny.
Twenty-six years haunt these high walls like ghosts
while under sixteen neon tubes I recline my chair and wonder
"How can it be?"
Yet smile, daydreaming streams of faces.
Clusters of warm erase forgotten quarrels.
"Like Mr. Chips," O think, but no maudlin moments here.
Outside I see the mellow warmth of trades
And hear the palm fronds' easeful grace, while somewhere afar off
Faint echoes of Dr. King whisper
As I dump the final uncollected term paper in the waste basket
Then begin the long walk home.



example

Jasen KIM "Kala"

FIRST TRIMESTER

Anna Marie CHRISTIANSEN

In the night
my belly full of tiny seed
and all of its implications
I wonder
about fire escape routes
about fidelity and integrity
much beyond control
feeding the small one my fear:
my bowl of doubt and regret.

In that hour I close my eyes
And see horror
baptizing the future,
over and over,
until I weary sleep.

walk like the dead through another day
and do it all over again.

Heart

John HORNE

A Once Wounded Heart,
that refuses to heal,
turns hard and green and grows spines
And lives in a desert,
of mistrust and fear,
And longs for a few drops of rain.

GAZING CANE

Jordan WILLIAMS

Home. Midnight. As I sit alone in a field of tall sugar cane,
I think of the green face on the Statue of Liberty and
wild girls leaning out of bright red convertibles cruising Sunset
Boulevard.
And me...here...Other girls...together...out there.

Shafts of cane brush against my cheek. Stars fade, looking pale.
Stars above the Golden Gate Bridge shine brighter for the wait-
ress standing there.
She smiles. She lives somewhere...not here.
The screen door slams in the distance.

I turn my eyes toward home. The light above my father's shack
is just another star.
High above, red lights flash against ebony.
A jet, carrying a young actress,
soars toward Hollywood.
Me...below...alone...
In quiet darkness.

I hear my name in my father's voice, echoing across the fields.
Stalks of cane scratch my skin as I rise to walk through the
fields...
Toward home.



Infinite Space

Ron MABUNGA (bunga)

HIGHWAY 99

Jordan WILLIAMS

Dark wind carries the odor of curry from the white lunch truck across
Highway 99, above the sugar cane stalks, circling distant peaks in fog.
The road rises, slicing through neat rows in crusty dirt.

A large ravine shelters pools of taro and
emits manure stench above the orange cliffs.
Dry shoots of crippled leaves suffocate
sole plumeria branches along the shoulder.

The field to the left is scorched.
Charcoal rows smother kidney-bean colored mud.
Cold smoke wanders above knee-high bushels
and palms, spread like giant green paper fans.

Fragrances of fermented pineapple replace
the odor of smoke lingering above umbrella trees.
Whiffs of caramelized mango in copper clay mingle.
Tiny spikes of pineapple crowns
grow toward the half-gray sky;
clouds are whipped like fruity frosting.

Pine trees sunbathe and weeds stray across the road.
Tumbleweed clumps nearly hide the sign
“Waialua Coffee”.
Soldier-straight branches blooming hibiscus square off patches
of fresh grass, still damp from mist.
Air smells like fresh leaves.
Water droplets vanish.

Pale lights puncture clouds above the peaks
and spotlight the meadow.
Rays pour across flat land.
The sparkling green grows brighter
as a shining glow whitens the gray mist
and I smile.



**End of a
hard day's
work**

Jasen KIM "Kala"

LITTLE LIES

POEM FOR TWO VOICES

Nicki REID

That looks nice

That joke was funny

That's fine,
No problem,
I was going there
Anyway

Tease me
It's funny.

I should say
What I mean
No more little lies

No it doesn't
You should change

I'm laughing
But it's not funny

Anyway you see it,
It's out of the way
Tease me
It hurts.

MOTOWN

Kristen DEMPS

My brain will spill out of my head,
I thought,
as you placed your massive, heavy studio headphones
over my tiny ears. I sat on the floor,
Indian style, my long pigtails brushing plush
beige carpet, shiny vinyl discs
scattered around me.
Close your eyes, and just listen,
you said,
until you hear it one part at a time.
Suddenly sound swirled around me in the dark,
bouncing back and forth and around.
I wanted to reach out and catch it, pin it down,
but I had to wait for it to come to me
when it was just the thumping drums pounding inside my head,
Then the sweet, smooth singing of the violins;
the twinkling, dancing piano line followed,
and the melodious guitars whined lonely notes on me,
until they met with the voices—
those sad and suffering voices who cried out to pull me
into their grown-up world of love and pain...
but then they would slowly fade away.
Your headphones now rest on a shelf under the dusty turntable,
smaller than they used to be.
My friends call me the “poster child” for Motown music,
but they don’t know how it speaks to me,
how it came to my cradle and sang me to sleep,
or how a song never really starts before the thumping drums.



Huntington?

Micah CLARKE





Luminate

Ron MABUNGA (bunga)

WOMAN'S WORK

Anna Marie CHRISTIANSEN

Today I wrote three poems.
They tumbled out of me
Like words to late to take back
Actions fatally irresistible

They had to come
swelling before fullness
Before deep breaths
Before I could change a diaper,
wash my hands,
and see to the evening meal.

A FINAL WAVE GOODBYE

Douglas H. CLARK

Lingering...heavy
by theses stone-faced bluffs
resisting torrents of salt-sea fury
tearing at the unrelenting façade
sea-salt emotions mingle with bitter fog
perspiration from hostile warfare
between warm and cold currents
dark encounters that obscure
peaceful thoughts

Retreating...slowly
The hoary mist subsides.
a lingering rogue wave
delivers its violent rebuke,
a final attempt to soften callous lines
of stone-faced bluffs (still defiant).
A disenchanted sea turns reticent
Unexpected tranquility
Hastens my farewell.

AMERICAN WRANGLERS IN MOLDOVA

Ben NEWBRY

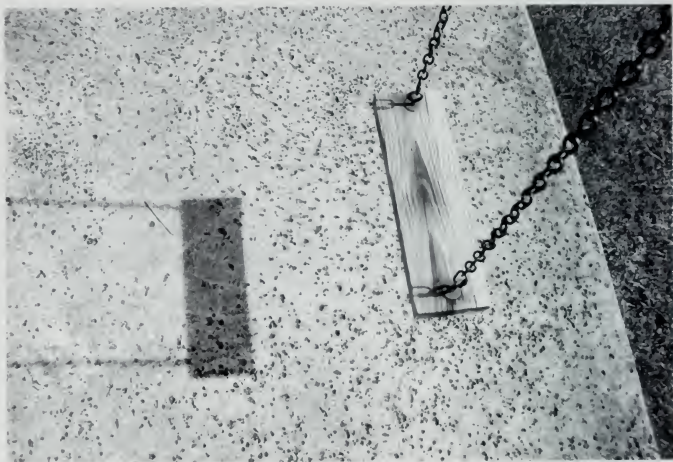
“Aliona!” shouts Igor impatiently. “Aliona, where are my pants? I have to go to school early today!”

“I washed them last night while you were sleeping; they should be dry,” comes the docile and tired response.

Aliona is like many good people I’ve met along my way. She’s bright and goal oriented. She helps whenever and wherever she can, and she constantly thinks of other people’s needs. She gets home late on a normally busy day, for example, and the first thing running through her head is not the sleep she so sorely craves, but a dirty battered pair of jeans that don’t even belong to her.

For most of us, our kind act would involve some laundry soap, a handy machine, and two minutes of our time; we live in America after all.

But Aliona doesn’t live in America. She knows it’s her brother’s only pair of pants. Even though he won’t admit it, he gets embarrassed that they are constantly dirty. He can’t help it—he’s a typical 12-year old boy, except he has no father and his mother works in Moscow, a 2-day train ride from the beleaguered little country of Moldova. They haven’t seen her in over five months now, but the money will come soon; they’re sure of it. Until then, he has to rely on his 17-year-old sister for parenting.



Lonely

Kahala ALANCASTRE

The jeans get washed and Aliona stays up an extra hour doing other chores before climbing under covers and attempting to shiver herself to sleep on a cold Eastern European winter night with no heat.

Moldova is a small country on the border of Romania and Ukraine. Politically insignificant, Moldova gained its independence in 1990 after 40 years of oppressive Soviet rule.

They haven't fared much better on their own. Boasting the worst economy in all of Eastern Europe, with an average family income of just over \$30 a month and torn apart by ethnic conflict, Moldavians have little reason to be happy.

As you enter the country you notice the despondency right away. The farther you get from the capital city of Kishinev, the more depressed the people become, the more hopeless they seem. Their deep-rooted cultural spirit desecrated by Soviet assimilation techniques, Moldova finally entered into a new era with hope, only to have it die out quickly as the country spiraled financially downward and corruption became the law of the land. A hefty dose of humiliation and shame at their newfound poverty accompanied the old scars of oppression.

With over 90 percent of the population Christian Orthodox, Moldova is a deeply religious country. The Russian and Romanian Orthodox churches are both

state-sponsored and virtually everybody professes a deep and abiding belief in the Bible.

How ironic that in a Christian-dominated country, the people seem to have lost the one thing that they profess to believe in—faith.

They have become so jaded that they rarely participate in any form of governance, letting the Communist Party regain control in the parliament and presidency in 2001. It doesn't matter any more; no matter what, things will always be the same—corruption, poverty and more corruption.

That's the tale two young Americans heard constantly from locals. Every day for months on end, the "hopelessness of our situation" was iterated and reiterated. The corruption and poverty were apparent enough, especially to suburban middle-class 20-year-olds. The pair made frequent trips to Orhei, a city far, far away from Kishinev, for their missionary work. Everything there seemed worse than in Kishinev. The average family income decreased by half to around \$15 a month, yet prices were the same. Jobs were scarce and one would've been hard-pressed to find a male over 20 whose primary occupation wasn't overworking his inflated liver with copious amounts of homemade alcohol. The pair didn't like coming here at first—a depressing place even for Moldova.

That all changed with Aliona. If you had looked closely you could've seen that she had it tough—the bags under the eyes, the same clothes worn in different ways to disguise the fact that she had very little. Of course the two Americans didn't look closely.

They saw a bright and vivacious young girl; a sea of faith and a wellspring of hope—the antithesis of her country.

The Americans befriended her right away; she was already a member of their faith. When no one else came to church on Sunday, she was there. If there was an assignment, she would get it done without so much as a complaint or negative word.

The Americans were being constantly asked for money, but never by her. She would never let on that she hadn't eaten in days, or that she had no firewood and would huddle with her brother in blankets to try to fall asleep in 30 below weather. She would try to fool you into thinking her wardrobe was larger than it was, that other people needed the help worse. She believed God would help her to help others; that's just the way it was. Igor did need a new pair of jeans, but the ones he had weren't so bad yet. They could survive.

“Hey Elders, you're late again,” comes the call from the gate accompanied by that angelic smile from the girl whose last name, Anghel, literally means angel. The

Americans smile back, happy to be with someone so happy and vibrant. They have both been in Moldova for 6 months now, and they figure they know Aliona pretty well. They found out about the dead father and absentee mother after a couple of months, and they're finally starting to realize that she and her brother keep wearing the same clothes.

"I hope you brought a good lesson today," she says sincerely.

"Oh we did," came the Americans' reply. They had in truth simply glanced at a well-known scripture moments prior on the bus, before getting off in Orhei.

"Good, come in and have a seat."

The Americans come into the most humble of homes, and sit at a table already prepared with food for them. They eat and give their short lesson, unaware that they just ate a week's worth of food for Aliona and Igor. Aliona smiles warmly and offers to help with Sunday duties that week.

"Hey, cool jeans," says one of the Americans to Igor. "Back home, holes in the knees are all the rage."

The jeans are a gift, a godsend if you will. Three years earlier an American aid effort reached Moldova with the good intention of distributing used clothing to a destitute people. The Americans came with good intentions, and left one week later—their contribution,

no doubt, to promoting world peace or solving world hunger. Most of the clothing magically found its way into the hands of black market dealers who sold it at inflated prices to local customers. A few articles made it to those in need, among which was a pair of well-kept Wrangler jeans. It was a miracle that he even got those jeans, and even though the jeans were becoming worn and threadbare, Aliona knew that they were Igor's prized possession, and she treated them that way.

The snow finally melted in late spring. The long, cold Moldovan winter was finally over. This was good news for the missionaries as they were tired of walking in the snow and cold all day. Sure they had warm clothes, but their feet were so hard to keep warm and the face could never be fully covered and if there was wind . . . well that made things pretty unbearable.

"You know, it was a tough winter but I think we really learned a lot," said one to the other.

"Yeah," came the reply. "These people are in such humble circumstances. It's great to bring the message of hope that we have to them."

They headed over to Aliona's in Orhei; they knew they could count on her for a renewed member-missionary effort.

When they got to her house, the Americans were surprised and shocked to see, of all people, Aliona's mom, Elena Babliuc, standing at the gate to greet them.

The Americans stood dumbfounded as Elena regaled them with stories of Aliona's struggles – the lack of heat all winter long, the lack of food, lack of clothing.

"It's amazing she even survived! Where were you when she needed you? The least you could do was help her get some firewood and maybe some food. And look at Igor's jeans!" the accusing jabs of Elena struck deep in the young Americans.

"Mom," Aliona interjected in a docile and unassuming manner. "Mom, they did help me when I was in need. They always had a spiritual thought and they gave me opportunities to serve. I relied on the Lord like the scriptures say and I made it through, even when I never thought I would. They helped me have the power to do that."

The mother softened and tears came to her eyes, as well as the Americans'. Everyone left a little bit different from that encounter.

The Americans were supposed to bring faith and hope to a people who had lost both, but instead they learned what those words truly meant from a girl who had no business having either.

"You know, Aliona has really changed my life," says one American to the other as they get ready to leave. He

unplugs his portable space heater, packs in his electric razor and takes his last load of clothes out of the dryer.

“It’s amazing she’s even alive,” came the guilt-ridden reply.

The Americans are home now, freshly armed with inward change, thanks to their mission to Moldova. They are more spiritually focused now; they have more faith.

“When I learned of her humble circumstances and thought about all the things she did to help others, I literally melted inside. From that day onward I was a different person,” says one of the Americans about Aliona in a homecoming talk given at his church.

He uses all the regular homecoming stuff—the girls go wild over it. Most of his talk is about Aliona and her abiding faith in Christ. This is good talk material, he thinks. Girls love it.

The talk is over and the faithful, bright, young, recently-returned missionary goes home recounting stories of his “adventures” to family and friends, who listen intently and proudly on every word. He is a changed man now.

He has learned from his mission to go to bed early and to study before going to bed and directly after getting up. After the family story time, he heads up to his

room and shuts the door. He looks at the picture of himself with Aliona and Igor.

“What humble and amazing people,” he mutters to himself, as he looks one more time at Igor’s tattered, ragged jeans.

He settles down in his bed with his scriptures for some good study time, but is soon interrupted by his bedside phone.

“Hello?” he answers, a bit confused at who would be calling at this hour.

“Hey, Ben? This is Jenny, I shook your hand at your homecoming, remember?”

“Uhhhhyeah, of course I remember.”

“Well, I was wondering, me and my friends are going to the lake tonight for a late night barbecue, and I know you just got back and all, but you wanna come?”

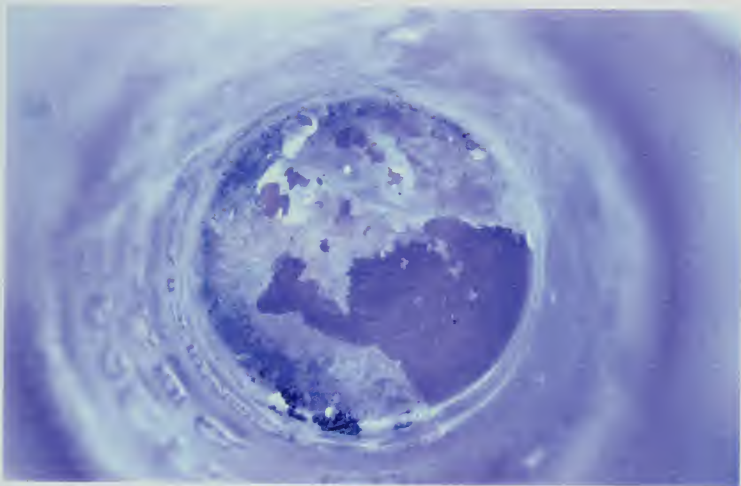
“Sure, I’ll be over in ten.”

“Alright, see ya then!”

“See you . . .” Ben trails off as he realizes he’s speaking to the dial tone.

A girl! Calling for him! This was great news.

The American slaps on some Aqua di Gio cologne and slips gel into his hair, messing it up for the first time in over two years. He puts on a good barbecue vibe shirt and looks over at the picture of Aliona and Igor one more time as he slips on his designer jeans . . . and heads out the door.



Ben's World in a Bottle

Micah SMITH

Boat of malta

Federica TONON





HALLWAY COMMUNITIES

Amber CLARK

The bell rings. It is time once again to join the throngs of the McKay hallway here at BYU-Hawaii. It seems everyone has classes at 9 and 11. Hundreds of students pour down the hall; whispers and shouts are exchanged in dozens of languages, each as at home here as the next. It is here that people from a myriad of countries and educational backgrounds merge together becoming, for those few precious minutes, a part of a larger swarming hive of energy and potential. As I search for communities that I am a part of, I realize that right now, this hallway is a vital and somewhat amusing community in my life.

All communities must possess some qualities, some substance which holds them together. One might say that the “glue” that holds us together is the cement wall, the floor and the roof, of the sidewalk paths and beaten trails. It could be common destinations or the need to share this walkway during a common time. We are held together by common beliefs, goals and dreams of the future in uncommon lands. Whatever the reason each of us must enter these paths and trails, and the great McKay Hallway, at some point during our academic

Contemplate

Erika KUTA



career; most of us are frequent visitors passing through ten or twenty times in one day.

Once we have entered this community, as in any community, there are rules of conduct. Here however they are seldom spoken and never spelled out entirely. Innate, internalized, they go without speaking. An obvious example of these rules regulates the distance needed between two people walking down the hall side-by-side. The distance separating a person from the person beside them is regulated by their familiarity with that person. Strangers are not allowed inside a six-inch radius unless they are passing and therefore will only occupy the space for a brief moment or two. Close friends are allowed within a two or three-inch radius and significant others can come as close as they want as long as both can still walk comfortably (or one submits to awkwardness).

Stopping in the halls during high traffic periods is prohibited. The sudden introduction of "chatting communities" causes a vast amount of confusion and frustration, possibly even accidents. To avoid these problems friends of the BYU-Hawaii hallway community have created garden walkways and winding paths leading nowhere for the slower moving traffic and the chatting communities. To pass large amounts of traffic rapidly one must go

between these gardens and the poles that support the hallway roof, often walking in the gutter, which separates the two, if it has not recently rained and the chemistry students are not washing their latest experiment down the drain.

All of this is second nature to most of the participants of the BYU hallway community; however, there are a rare few that have no concept of personal space. These “non-conformists” are typically avoided where at all possible. Perhaps they never know their crime since so much of this goes unwritten; for some though it is doubtful writing would help.

One rule has been written: NO BIKE RIDING/PARKING, ROLLER-SKATING, SKATEBOARDING IN HALLWAY. An old rusting sign high on a post, supporting the roof, floating above where most eyes even glance to read. During the day there is not room for these anyway; at night nobody watches.

At night the McKay hallway takes on a whole different set of rules. There are generally only a few travelers at a time, coming in groups of two or threes heading to or from the cafeteria. They talk in moderate or hushed tones, the hallways echos amplifying voices and stories of those who talk to loudly. The garden paths and benches are occupied

with couples huddled close, entwined and oblivious to the world beyond themselves. Passers-by keep their distance so as not to disturb or feel awkward. The hall absorbs their secrets; more stories it will never tell.

The stories of this community are varied and usually quite recent. Mondays are filled with answers to “How was your weekend?” and Friday afternoons with “What are you gonna do, man?”

“Did he ask you?”

“Did you pass it?”

“How’s your family?”

“What’d she say?”

Dreams and fears, homework and hopes of escape, all these are exchanged in passing here.

Those who linger on the library-side of the hall tell stories of dreaded tests and pass on rumors. Those tests we could never pass but somebody does and those who could never fail and then did. Men are created and destroyed in that five-foot section of hallway.

As I sit for a moment on a bench and watch the faces coming up and down the corridor, I smile at the sense of belonging. I am a senior now and I know so many of the faces, the hall holds so many memories. Even without seeing a familiar face the mere presence of bodies in this hall, headed off to

familiar destinations, brings a sense of belonging, a sense of community.

A crowd of half grown children march up the corridor which connects the Little Circle with the main hall. Bright faced and confident they enter the McKay, unaware of its significance. Drilled in the orderliness still necessary for their safety they march two by two.

“Are you on a field trip?” I ask the two dark-haired girls in the lead, falling in stride behind them.

“Yup, we’re going to the museum!” They proudly announce. Then, sensing that I belonged to this place in which they are just wide-eyed strangers, they ask for directions. The hall is so well organized that we are all headed the same way, me to my home in the Hales and them to the treasure trove of stuffed birds and mammals few citizens of this hall have ever seen, though all have passed by a hundred times. We who live here just walk right by the wonders these young minds have traveled here to find, not even realizing what we’ve missed until it is too late. The teacher calls out to my new friends and is echoed by twenty authoritative voices mimicking the cry:

“Stop at the corner.”

“Stop.”

"Stop."

"Stop."

"Stop at the corner!" Their shouts break into our conversation. Turning I see a flustered young teacher hurrying toward the front, eyes darting to track the progress of the first and the last simultaneously. She too recognizes that I belong here, knows what I am doing, and the shouting stops; my friends round the corner and confidently lead on while she drops back to her vantage point at the rear.

"See those stairs? It's right by those stairs," I say.

"Right by those stairs?"

"Just past them."

"Just past them."

"Right here."

"Here?"

"Here."



Agency

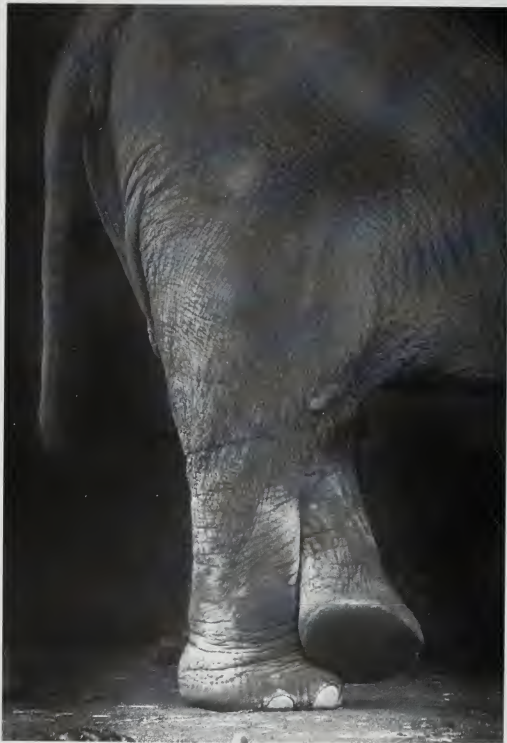
Lucy MARTIN

THE DAY GRANDMA WORE LEATHER PANTS

Elisa HALLETT

It was a normal Tuesday, as uneventful as most Tuesdays had been for the past seventeen years of my life. I woke up, went to seminary, ate my breakfast of textured-flavored soy protein sausages, granola and rice milk and went to school. I wasn't a normal teenage girl but how could you expect to be normal growing up as a Mormon in Santa Cruz, California, the last of the great hippie holdouts. So what if I had been a vegetarian since the age of ten or a proclaimed feminist by seventh grade? I was a teenager trying to find myself; I was allowed to be strange. My 72-year old grandmother had no excuse. She was supposed to have found herself years ago, back when Elvis was considered the devil incarnate and Ronald Reagan was just an actor. Apparently my grandmother was still looking because it was on that Tuesday that she came riding up on a Hog, wearing leather pants.

My grandmother had been a prime example of the stereotypical, sweater wearing, birthday card giving kind of gal. She had helped me sew my junior prom dress and came to all my high school plays. She was soft-spoken, genteel and liked to paint with watercolors, so you could see why the leather pants would come as a



Packyderm

Jasen KIM "Kala"

shock to my family. Granted, she had gone to her 50th high school reunion recently and had revisited the days of her youth, but leather pants? My grandma hopped off the bike and strode up to the house, grinning from ear to ear, completely oblivious to the stunned looks on our faces.

"Folks," she declared. "I've decided to divorce your grandfather and marry my high school sweetheart on Valentine's Day."

We were so shocked that this statement didn't register for a few moments. How could a faithful member of the church decide to divorce her husband of decades and remarry a nonmember? Grandma proceeded to tell us about how she had found true love at the age of sixteen, but her parents had put the kibosh on the budding romance because he was from the wrong side of the tracks. After she had finished her story she jumped back on the motorcycle and sped off, leaving us with our bemused thought and a cloud of dust.

It was on that Tuesday that I questioned everything that I thought to be true about love, the church, and what was right or wrong. Was it right to be with the person you truly loved at the cost of hurting another? Was her high school sweetheart the person she was destined to be with forever or was it just part of a post-midlife crisis? How could a person who seemed so strong in the gospel do something that seemed very

wrong? That Tuesday rocked my very sheltered world, the bubble of a Brady Bunch existence that I had lived in. I was forced to evaluate the situation and determine my own thoughts and feelings and not base it solely on my parents' opinion. It was on that day, the infamous day Grandma wore leather pants that I started my journey out of adolescence and into adulthood.

SAVING GRACE

BY Jacob JACKSON

One evening I was driving home from town and I guess the radio was off or something, because I noticed a bunch of odd bumper stickers and stuff like that, and they were sending my thoughts down funny paths. A faux-Jesus fish on the back of an early model Civic got me thinking about something Nietzsche wrote. The fish had legs and the name “Darwin” placed where it would ordinarily have said “Jesus,” and somehow this reminded me of something from “Thus Spoke Zarathustra.” I haven’t actually read the book; I’ve just heard about it once or twice. Basically what Zarathustra said in the book (or so I’m told) was that the people had killed God: “God is dead! You have killed him.” Or something like that. I was wondering what he meant by that exactly. He could have just as easily said that there was no God, but he had to say that he was “dead”. . . I mean when you tell a kid that there is no such thing as the Easter bunny you don’t say that he’s dead. I thought maybe Nietzsche was talking about science killing God or something, and it kind of took off from there.

So that’s what my mind was doing while I was on one of those evening freeway drives where everything is shades of yellow, ochre, and orange and my windshield



Untitled

Erika KUTA

was glazed with the little dried-rain mineral spots that were burning umber when this truck swerved in between me and the Darwin fish car without signaling. My first reaction was to get into the next lane over and steer clear of the guy, but I couldn't do it because someone in an Infinity with personalized license plates that had the letters "JRK1" on them was right next to me. So there I was with the median wall on my left, guy in the Infinity (JRK1) to my right and crazy driver in an old rusty-blue dog of a truck in front when I noticed a bumper sticker on the truck that said "My God isn't dead. Sorry about yours." At the time it had the impact of a significant event planned by someone else; fate, or an act of some God. I read the other bumper sticker: "Got God?" and was thinking you know times are hard for God when he needs to get advertising ideas from Milk people when the dude in the Infinity sprayed his high-powered luxury car windshield cleaner and shot a curtain of golden mist into the air in front of me. For about a second I had this sort of transcendental-feeling like I had passed into a higher realm of spiritual being that is beyond time and other terrestrial constructs, then just when I'm feeling that I have been enlightened the cloud's sun-fire hue turns to brake-light red, and I'm jolted back into reality by the rear bumper of the old truck in front of me.

It didn't seem real; how fast and slow it all seemed to happen, and how hard the hit was. Everything was moving in slow motion, but I couldn't react fast enough to stop it...then pow! I got out of my car and looked over my dented-up front end just kind of wishing I could go back to that golden cloud of ethereal light and stay there. The only thing damaged on the truck, oddly enough, was the "Got God?" sticker that I had thought was so tacky. At about the moment I was going to chuckle to myself over smudging the sticker in question, the driver's side door opened and a woman shimmied her way out like a soft boulder that had just gotten fed up with where it was and ran at me in a flurry of swinging breasts and bouncing thighs. Her cheeks hopped and fluttered with each mince of those girthy legs and her eyebrows were about an inch away from hitting her hair line. She must have plucked them completely out and drawn them in again with makeup. It seemed as though things were moving in slow motion again with this heaving pendulous mass of fury coming at me. This time the illusion was caused by the way all that fat moved so quickly in every direction other than towards me while her actual body, and abused frame smothered way down under there somewhere, didn't make much forward progress at all. To my relief, rather than tackling me to the ground she threw her double-abundant arms around me and said, "Oh God bless you brother..." then focus-



Lei O Mano

Jasen KIM "Kala"

Hawaiian
shark tooth dagger.
Used in war by the
ancient Hawaiians.
These razor sharp
tiger shark teeth
provided the warrior
with a very deadly
serrated edge to
fight with in battle.

Tauihu

Jasen KIM "Kala"

carved spirals and central figure of the
Maori war canoe prow.

These spirals represent two things.

First, the solid lines represents our lives,
and each notch represents knowledge or
a lesson learned during our lives.

Second, there are actually two solid lines
in each spiral representing parents, and
the notches represented children, thus a
continuity of mankind.





ing attention onto my car, "I'm so sorry...Can you ever forgive me? Oh, you poor thing! Praise th'Lord you weren't hurt!" All the while her cheeks and chins were doing some serious cha-cha dancing. She put her hands on the back of my head and pulled it into her super sized sweat-slick bosom. I was trying to think of a diplomatic way of asking her to stop hugging and shaking me. Being embraced by this woman felt like being chewed on and swallowed by a giant toothless fish, complete with not-so-fresh-caught odor.

But being the articulate fellow that I am, the best I could come up with was "Uh, yah." She took me by the arm and showed me her Bible, which she kept in a scarf and always held in her right hand while she was driving.

"Makes fer a little extra work with the stick shift, but with Jesus as your co-pilot you can't go wrong. Ya oughta try it!"

While all this was going on her anomaly of a thin husband was reaching into the glove box to retrieve something. Maybe it was because the man looked exactly like a composite sketch: mustache, 80's pimp sunglasses, mesh baseball hat, plaid shirt and so on, but for a moment I thought he was reaching for a gun and I saw my life get bored and fed up while considering flashing before my eyes ("It's been done...too cliché" it told me before settling back down into it's comfortable little arm chair... "Don't bug me anymore").

Turns out that the fat lady's "top ten most wanted" look alike husband was reaching for a paperback Bible and a bunch of other stuff which included pamphlets and a handful of bumper stickers. What followed over the next couple of minutes was kind of a blur. I mostly remember them saying stuff that seemed like a complete non-sequitur and me not knowing how to respond. Then it was a whole bunch of "hallelujah's" and "praise the Lords" and the fat lady singing while Jack Sprat uni-bibler congratulated me for being "saved". A moment later I was standing there, with both arms full of Bible, bumper stickers and miscellaneous Jesus junk, watching them drive away. I felt like I had been in two car crashes in a row, then mugged. You'd think they would have told me, but I still don't know the name of the religion that I was bamboozled into converting to. The truck was long gone by the time I realized that maybe I should have gotten a license plate number or something.

Presently there was nothing left of them but the pile of stuff, and an odor which can best be described as something between a wet dog and an old fish. I stood there for a while, staring down the freeway while cars rushed by into the brown and black dusk with their red-eye taillights holding their detached stares steady on my confused form. In the meantime my car engine made a little splutter which drew my attention to the

fact that it was still running and waiting impatiently. I climbed in, dumped the relics of my newly gained salvation onto the passenger seat and headed for home.

After I got off the freeway and onto the windy country road back home I thought over the benefits of being “saved”: makes for an interesting way to start a conversation with someone at a party. It’s a quick way to get rid of Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses (“A message about God? Oh, uh no that’s okay, I don’t need it...I’ve been saved.”) And hey, better safe than sorry right? I mean if I really was saved it’ll be a big relief on this big Judgment day they talk about. As you might expect I was driving cautiously, so it took me about a half hour longer to get home than usual. I couldn’t help but wonder if being saved meant that I couldn’t believe in evolution any more? Or what any of that evening’s events really meant. My thoughts trailed off somewhere and soon enough I was lying on my couch watching T.V.

Several months later I was sitting on the porch thinking things over and watching my cat Charlie, who was lounging in the garden. The colors outside were almost too bright to look at, and he was just kind of loafing the way only cats can, with his black and white paws tucked under his body and squinting his eyes. A black and orange butterfly caught his attention and he crept up slow and smooth. The tip of his tail twitched back and forth and he looked like a big grasshopper

ready to jump, but a quick gust shook a dry hydrangea leaf loose and scared him. He jumped a little and blew his cover, so the butterfly took off and that was that. With a nonchalant arrogance Charles rolled over and batted at the leaf for a while, then clawed up the porch mat, which wasn't far off, and finally, defeated but not deterred, he stalked off through some white gladiolas with his tail pointing back and forth into the sky. Most likely he was going off to find some more welcome mates and dead leaves to terrorize. I chuckled once or twice and walked out to meet the mail man who had been making his way up the street while all this was going on. He gave me another AOL CD, a form that announced that I may be a finalist in one of those 10 million dollar sweepstakes, and a letter informing me that my insurance company was doubling my premium because the couple that I rear ended all those months ago had pressed charges (I wasn't even invited to the trial!) and came away with a settlement that was more than I make in two years. From the looks of it, I'll be paying it off for the rest of my life...I guess that's what it costs to be saved these days.



Prophets

John REESE

TESTING TESTING

Louise PLUMMER

Mama makes me give her an Alzheimer's test. She says it's part of my chores like cleaning the bathroom and taking out the garbage. I say to her, "You know the test by heart, why don't you just give it to yourself every morning," and she says to me, "What if one of these mornings I forget that I'm supposed to have the Alzheimer's test? What if I forget there is even such a thing as Alzheimer's?"

I don't say what I'm thinking because of the fear in her eyes. I'm thinking that if she didn't know about Alzheimer's, she'd be more relaxed and enjoy her life instead of imagining how she could end up being a vegetable like Nana, sitting in the Barcalounger, wetting her pants, and staring into her lap like something's going to grow there.

"Okay," I say. "Who is the president of the United States of America?"

"George W. Bush," she says. "And Cheney is the vice-president."

"That's not part of the test," I say.

"I know, but I'm checking myself."

"Subtract seven from 93 and keep subtracting for six times."

"I hate this part," Mama says. She looks at the ceiling as she subtracts: "Seven from 93 is 86; seven from 86 is 79 and seven from 79 is 72 and seven from 72 is 67 and seven from—"

"That's enough," I say. "You can subtract sevens. What word were you supposed to remember from yesterday?"

"Shimmy. The word was shimmy."

"That's right," I say. "Today's word will be—"

"And the day before yesterday's word was texture." Mama looks relaxed now, her butt resting against the humming dishwasher.

"Good," I say. Today's word is anaphora, meaning numbered." I grin. "Good word, huh?"

"You're going to be a good teacher some day," Mama says. "The words are getting harder." She bites her lip and tries it: "Anaphora, a great word. All right then."

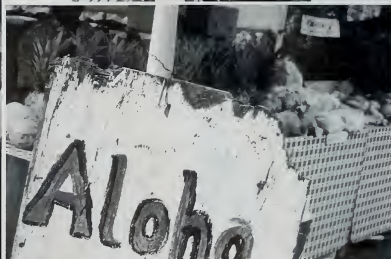
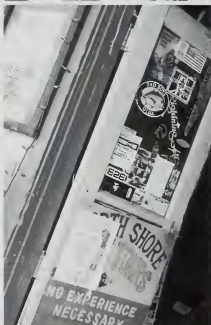
"What is Grandma Mosbrucher's maiden name?"

"Reichert."

"I'm going," I say. "You don't have Alzheimer's, Mama, and I doubt you ever will." The screen door slams behind me.

"Denise," she calls through the open window. "Don't forget tomorrow. Don't forget to test me tomorrow."

"I won't forget," I say. "You won't let me."



Haleiwa Collage

Regan KELLY

SPRING LAKE BLVD.

Sharon BEESLEY

A Great Egret wakes up just about the same time I do. I watch him hunt for his breakfast of fish, while I pour marshmallow cereal into a bowl. The sun comes up like a spotlight on him. My backyard's his stage and I'm his audience.

Mr. Great Egret dances across the mangrove jungle with Fred Astaire like elegance. His legs are formal canes and his long flexible neck looks like an untied bowtie. Fred Astaire was always wearing those white ties and vest in the movies my mother used to watch. I always thought he should loosen up a bit and untie that tie. My bird has had more than a dozen dance partners over the past year. Today's partner is a heron the color of ginger. They are my favorite to watch because they have a grace and technical excellence as they glide through the water. Mr. Great Egret's feet never touch the ground.

The sun creeps up more and the Egret spots his fish. It's in his mouth before I could have snapped a picture. He bows his head and flies away leaving the heron behind to finish her performance as a solo. I spoon in

the last of the marshmallows I saved until the end and go back into my house to get ready for school.

My dad takes my bowl and spoon as I walk into the kitchen. He looks out the window above the sink and says, "You know, we don't have a name for that bird that always come to the backyard. We could name him . . ."

Right then my older sisters are shuffling out of their rooms.

"Name what? Are we getting a new cat?"

"I want to name him! What are we naming?"

They've seen the egret about five times since he started showing up about a year ago, and now all of sudden they want to name him.

"Isn't it really my bird if you think about it? So," I pause. "Shouldn't I name him?"

My sisters think about it. They still want to name him.

My dad decides the best way to handle this is to have all of us pick a first, middle, and last name. Without out giving any thought Erin chooses *Box*, Katherine shouts "CAR!"

It's my turn to pick the last name—the most important name. This will be the name that will be carried down throughout many generations. Think important. Think Washington. Lincoln. Columbus. Something that goes with Box and Car. They didn't give me much to work with did they?

"I don't know . . . what about *Numbers*?" I really blew that one.

Box Car Numbers. You'd think we were naming a donkey. I begin to imagine a donkey tromping through my backyard and getting tangled up in the mangroves and my family going in to save him. Maybe by tomorrow everyone will have forgotten all about Box Car Numbers and I could rename him something like Mr. *Carefree Asteire*.



Pale

Cassandra TEMPLE

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